

State of California
The Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Responses to Public Recommendations for Changes in the 2003-04 Waterfowl
Regulations Received by the Fish and Game Commission
Between June 26 and August 28, 2003

**Section 502 - Waterfowl, Migratory; American Coot and Common Moorhen
(Common Gallinule)**

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter dated 07/28/03, requesting the season in the Southern San Joaquin Valley Zone to open at the end of October, split for some time in November are re-open near Thanksgiving and close as late as possible.

Proposal Source: Arthur Spaulding, Tulare Basin Wetlands Association

Recommendation: Accept with modification. The Department recommended an opening date of October 18 and closing date of January 25 with a one day split to give hunters the maximum amount of opportunity.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter dated 07/31/03, requesting a bag limit of 1 hen mallard.

Proposal Source: Terrance L. Chesney, Fair Oaks, CA

Recommendation: Reject. The federal frameworks allow 2 hen mallards and the Department supports their framework based on local and mid-continent mallard breeding population estimates.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter received 08/2003, commenting that longer seasons are preferred.

Proposal Source: David Poladian, Danville, California

Recommendation: Accept.

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Description of Proposed Action by Public: Testimony from the 08/01/03, requesting a delay of the duck hunting season in the Salton Sea area because of the West Nile virus.

Proposal Source: Donald E. Goms and James Salnier, Coachella Valley Mosquito and Vector Control District

Recommendation: Reject. The area of duck clubs and associated wetlands is relatively small compared to the total area that may provide water for breeding mosquitos. Without quantified information that suggests duck club wetland habitat is a significant contributor to mosquito habitat there is no basis for eliminating significant wildlife habitat for migrating wildlife.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter received 08/11/03, requesting a 107 day season and a 7 duck daily bag limit opening on October 11 and closing January 25.

Proposal Source: Mike Maier, Temple City, CA

Recommendation: Accept with modification. The Department recommended an opening date of October 18 and closing date of January 25 (102 day season including the 2 youth hunt days) in the Southern California Zone with a 7 duck daily bag limit.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter dated 08/13/03, recommending that the most important consideration should be season length and bag limits for increased hunter opportunity.

Proposal Source: Don Craig, Sacramento, CA

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Recommendation: Accept with modification. The Department recommended a season length of 102 days (including the 2 youth hunt days) and a 7 duck daily bag limit.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter received 08/19/03 requesting the season to open October 11 or 18, not September 27, a 107 day season, and the 60 day pintail season put at the end of the waterfowl season.

Proposal Source: Dan Emery, Colusa, CA

Recommendation: Accept with modification. The Department recommended a season length of 102 days (including the 2 youth hunt days) opening October 18. The Department proposed that a portion of the 60 day pintail season occur earlier in the fall because most ducks during October and November are still in their "eclipse" plumage. This brown coloration makes identifying the correct species difficult. Not allowing pintail in the early part of the season puts an unreasonable liability on hunters to determine the species correctly. The Department's proposal of a split pintail season running October 18 through October 26 and again on December 6 through January 25 in the Balance of State Zone addresses the liability issue.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter dated 08/23/03, recommending the same bag limits as last year's regulation, specifically a 5 mallards and 1 hen mallard.

Proposal Source: Terrance L. Chesney, Fair Oaks, CA

Recommendation: Reject. The federal frameworks allow 7 mallards with no more than 2 hen mallards and the Department supports the framework based on local and mid-continent mallard breeding population estimates. Also, reduction

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of the mallard bag limit from 7 to 5 and not reduce harvest significantly if our goal were to reduce harvest.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: letter dated 08/23/03, requesting a split season and a 5 duck daily bag limit.

Proposal Source: Scott Taves, Visalia, CA

Recommendation: Accept with modification. The federal frameworks allow for a 7 duck daily bag limit and the Department supports the framework based on local and mid-continent mallard breeding population estimates. Also, reduction of the mallard bag limit from 7 to 5 does not reduce harvest significantly if our goal were to reduce harvest.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: testimony from the 08/28/03 Commission meeting requesting a 2 week delay in opening the waterfowl season on public hunt areas in the Sacramento Valley.

Proposal Source: Charlie Hoppin, rice farmer and Rice Commission member

Recommendation: Accept.

Description of Proposed Action by Public: testimony from the 08/28/03 Commission meeting supporting the Department's recommendations.

Proposal Source: Rob Plath, California Waterfowl Association

Recommendation: Accept.